GOLD KEY®

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THE TWILIGHT ZONE

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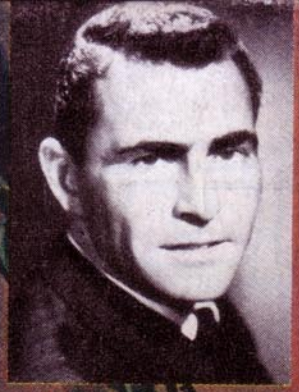

ROD SERLING

30¢

HE BOUGHT HIMSELF A CHARMED LIFE... BUT HE FORGOT TO ASK THE PRICE!

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A CHARMED LIFE
OKAY, BIG TONY, YOU'VE HAD IT! NOBODY EVER CROSSES THE BOSS AND LIVES! LEGS SAID TO TELL YOU-- "BYE-BYE"!
VR ROOM!
WAIT, BENNY! BEHIND YOU!
BIG TONY MARTEL MADE IT UP FROM THE STREETS THE HARD WAY--WITH HIS FISTS AND GUTS! BUT NOW FATE--IN THE FORM OF A HIRED KILLER-- IS GOING TO DROP HIM RIGHT BACK IN THE GUTTER-- PERMANENTLY! IT WILL, EXCEPT FOR THE GLEAMING PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS THAT SUDDENLY APPEARS FROM NOWHERE!...AND NOWHERE, AS WE ALL KNOW, IS THE CAPITAL OF ...THE TWILIGHT ZONE!
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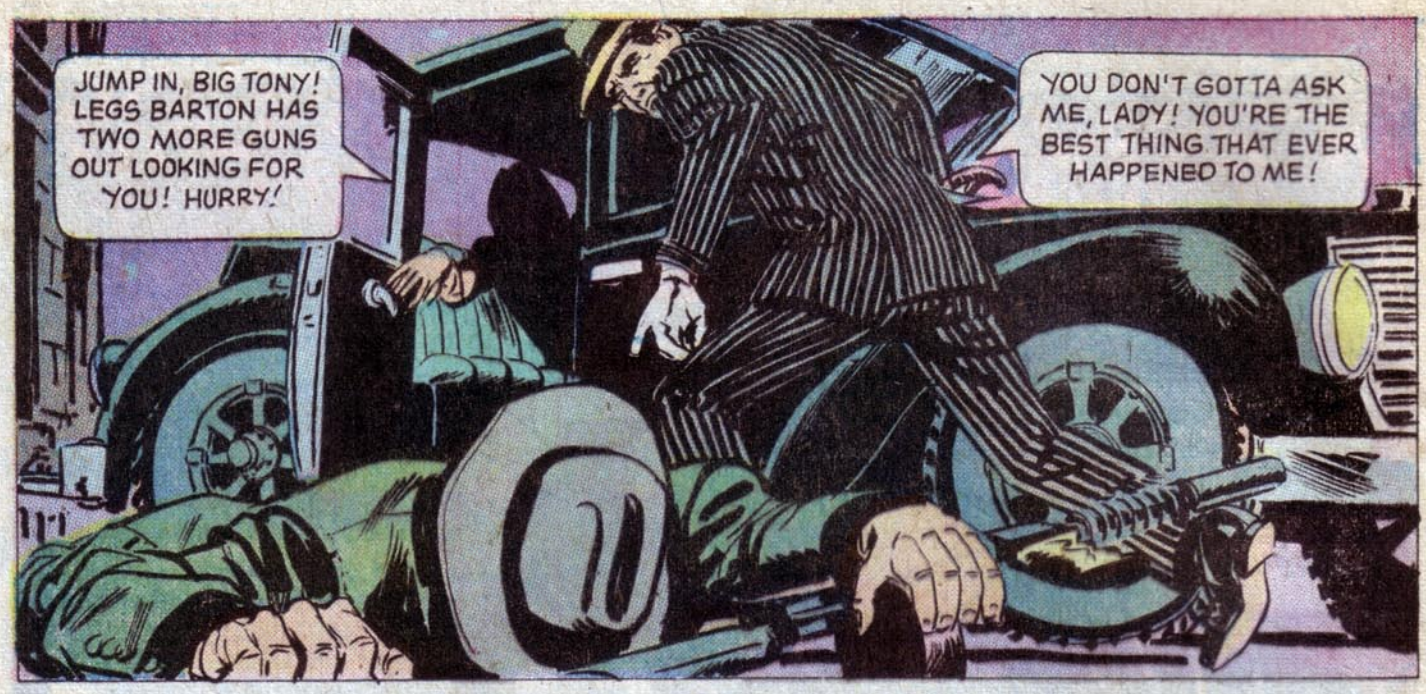
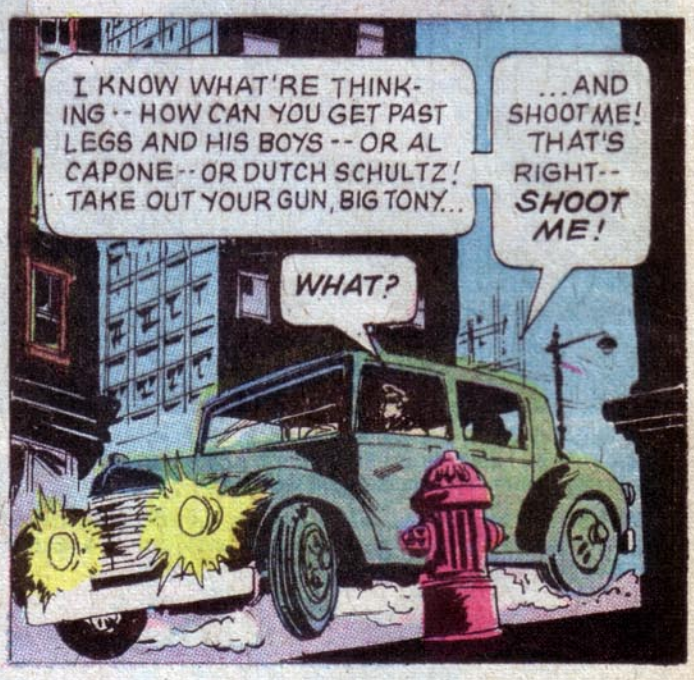

JUMP IN, BIG TONY! LEGS BARTON HAS TWO MORE GUNS OUT LOOKING FOR YOU! HURRY!
YOU DON'T GOTTA ASK ME, LADY! YOU'RE THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME!

WOWEEE! I DON'T KNOW YOU, LADY--BUT I SURE WOULD LIKE TO!
I KNOW YOU, TONY! I SAW YOU FIRST WHEN YOU WERE 17--YOU WERE CLUBBING THAT OLD PAWNBROKER UNTIL HE--

WAIT! NOBODY IN THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS ABOUT THAT! JUST ME AND THAT OLD MAN--AND HE'S DEAD! WHO--WHO IN THE DEVIL ARE YOU?
YOU'VE JUST ANSWERED YOUR OWN QUESTION!

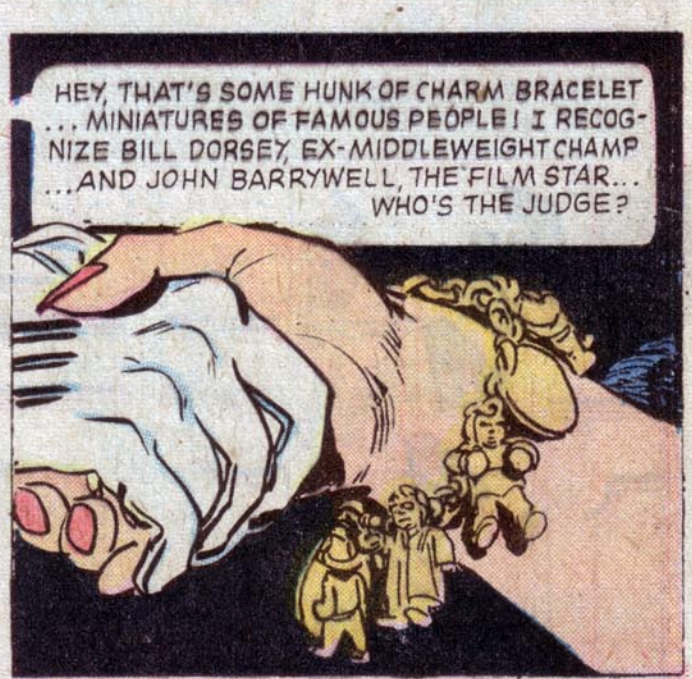
THE DEV--BUT YOU'RE A BEAUTIFUL DAME!
AND HE IS MANY THINGS-- MAN, WOMAN, CHILD, DOG, MUSHROOM, PEBBLE! I'M JUST ONE FEEBLE MANIFES-- TATION! AND I'M HERE TO MAKE YOU--KING OF THE RACKETS!


I KNOW WHAT'RE THINK- ING--HOW CAN YOU GET PAST LEGS AND HIS BOYS--OR AL CAPONE--OR DUTCH SCHULTZ! TAKE OUT YOUR GUN, BIG TONY...
...AND SHOOT ME! THAT'S RIGHT-- SHOOT ME!
WHAT?

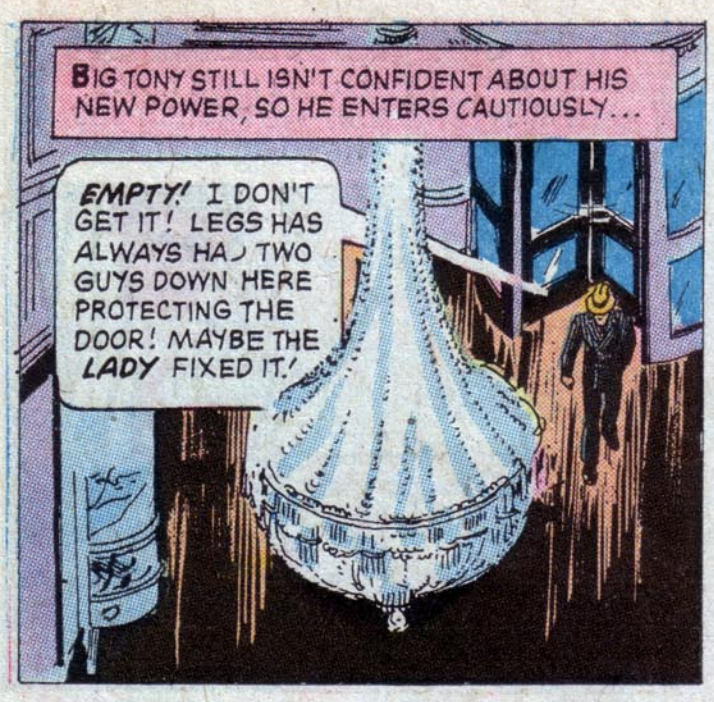
THE SOUND OF HER VOICE IS HYPNOTIC, AND BIG TONY SUDDENLY FINDS THE GUN IN HIS HAND...
NOTHING'S WRONG WITH THE GUN!... YOU CLEANED IT ONLY AN HOUR AGO! I JUST WILL NOT LET IT FIRE!...
CLICK! CLICK
NOW POINT IT OUT THE WINDOW AND TRY AGAIN!

LOOK AT IT GO! I DON'T KNOW WHAT POWER YOU'VE GOT, LADY-- BUT I SURE COULD USE A TON OF IT!
YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL, TONY--TO PROTECT YOU RIGHT TO THE TOP!
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

HOLD IT, LADY! WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?
EXCELLENT QUESTION! SOME DAY IN THE FUTURE --I DON'T KNOW WHEN-- I'LL ASK YOU TO DO JUST ONE JOB FOR ME... AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT!... SHAKE HANDS ON IT?


HEY, THAT'S SOME HUNK OF CHARM BRACELET ... MINIATURES OF FAMOUS PEOPLE! I RECOGNIZE BILL DORSEY, EX-MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMP ...AND JOHN BARRYWELL, THE FILM STAR... WHO'S THE JUDGE?

I'VE ANSWERED TWO QUESTIONS FOR YOU!... THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH! AHH... HERE WE ARE!
WHERE?... HEY!! IT'S LEGS BARTON'S PLACE! HA HA HA! YOU DON'T WASTE NO TIME! SEE YOU LATER-- LADY... AFTER I SEE LEGS!


BIG TONY STILL ISN'T CONFIDENT ABOUT HIS NEW POWER, SO HE ENTERS CAUTIOUSLY...
EMPTY! I DON'T GET IT! LEGS HAS ALWAYS HAD TWO GUYS DOWN HERE PROTECTING THE DOOR! MAYBE THE LADY FIXED IT!

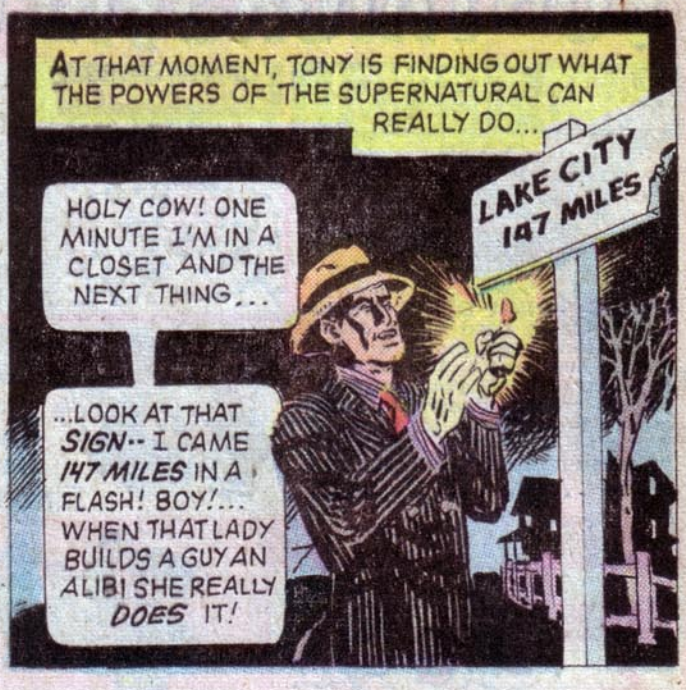
OKAY, TONY-- REACH! I HEARD MY BOYS DIDN'T GET YOU TONIGHT --SO I FIGURED YOU'D BE DROPPING IN! NOW-- YOU'RE GONNA DROP-- OUT!

THEN WITH A SWOOSH LIKE THE NORTH WIND AND A CRASH LIKE 10,000 GLASSES...
EYAAAAA
CRASH!

SHE DID IT! THE LADY SAVED ME!... NOW I'LL BE--
HOLD IT! SOMEBODY'S COMIN'!
I TELL YOU, MEN, BIG TONY IS GOING TO MAKE HIS MOVE TONIGHT --AND LEGS IS THE TARGET!

TOO LATE TO SAVE LEGS BARTON! BUT BIG TONY MAY STILL BE HERE!
SIMPSON! THE ASSISTANT D.A.! I'M DEAD!

NOT HERE! FUNNY--I HAD A FANTASTIC PREMONITION THAT HE WAS RIGHT BEHIND THIS DOOR! GUESS NOT! AFTERALL, A MAN CAN'T JUST--VANISH!

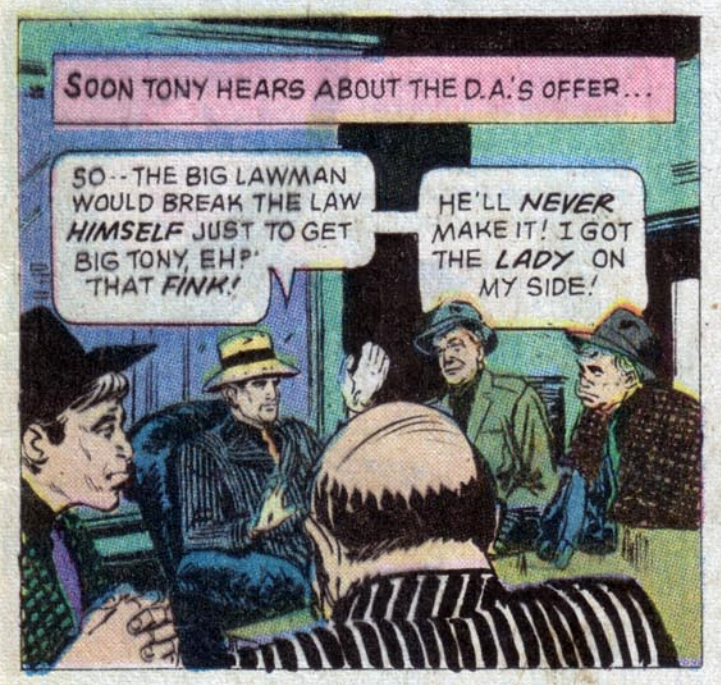

AT THAT MOMENT, TONY IS FINDING OUT WHAT THE POWERS OF THE SUPERNATURAL CAN REALLY DO...
LAKE CITY 147 MILES
HOLY COW! ONE MINUTE I'M IN A CLOSET AND THE NEXT THING...
...LOOK AT THAT SIGN--I CAME 147 MILES IN A FLASH! BOY!... WHEN THAT LADY BUILDS A GUY AN ALIBI SHE REALLY DOES IT!

WORD GETS AROUND FAST IN THE UNDER-WORLD! SOON THEY CALL HIM "THE MAN WITH THE CHARMED LIFE"...
MY GUN! IT NEVER FAILS ME! NEVER! BIG TONY, YOU'RE A WITCH!
CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!
HA HA HA!

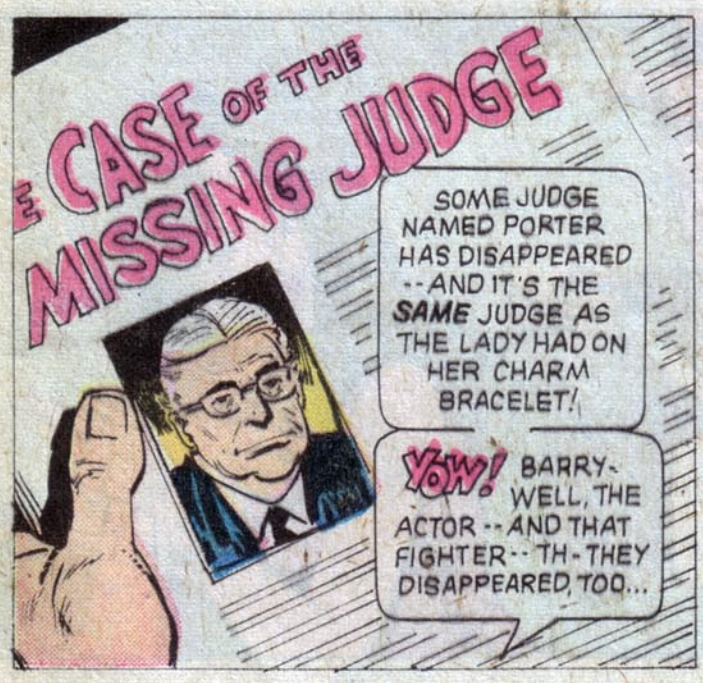
I GOT YOU AT LAST, BIG TONY! THERE'S ENOUGH DYNAMITE HERE TO BLOW YOU TO KINGDOM COME!
YEAH, ONLY--HA HA--THE FUSE--HA HA HA IT JUST WENT OUT!

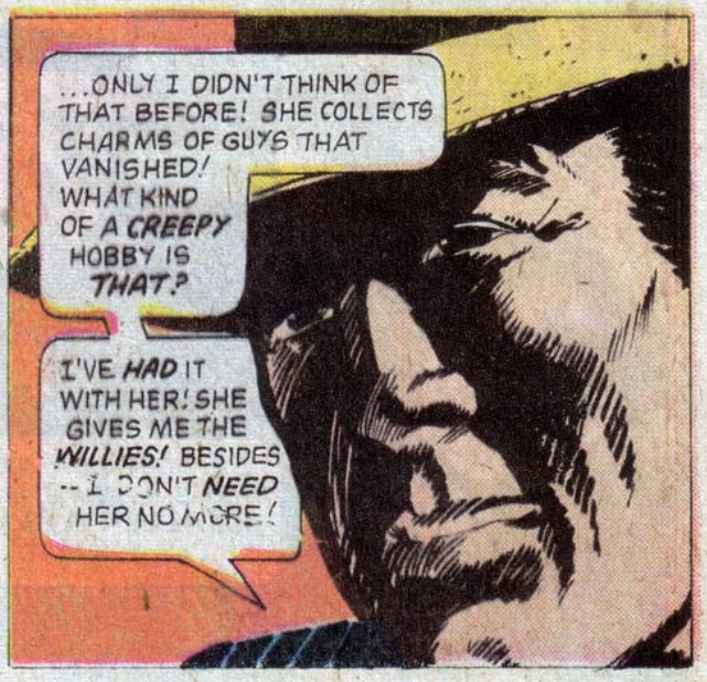
THE HIGHER TONY RISES, THE MORE DETERMINED ONE MAN IS TO NAIL HIM...
THIS WAREHOUSE WAS FULL OF ILLEGAL BOOZE AND GAMBLING MACHINES TWO HOURS AGO! HOW DID BIG TONY KNOW WE WERE GOING TO RAID IT? HE'S INCREDIBLE!

I'LL GIVE FIVE THOUSAND OF MY OWN CASH TO THE MAN WHO GETS THE GOODS ON MARTEL! I DON'T CARE IF YOU HAVE TO FRAME HIM!
YOU--YOU DON'T REALLY MEAN THAT, SIR! OR DO YOU?

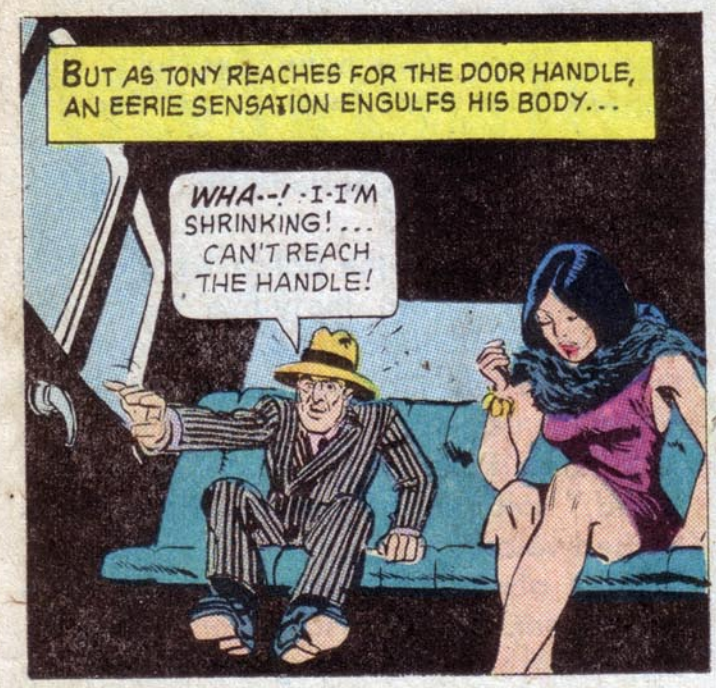

SOON TONY HEARS ABOUT THE D.A.'S OFFER...
SO--THE BIG LAWMAN WOULD BREAK THE LAW HIMSELF JUST TO GET BIG TONY, EH? THAT FINK!
HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT! I GOT THE LADY ON MY SIDE!

BUT THERE ARE SMALL THINGS THAT EVEN A MAN WITH A CHARMED LIFE MUST SUFFER...
ONLY GOOD THING ABOUT DENTISTS' OFFICES IS YOU GET TO CATCH UP ON YOUR READING--IF YOU LIKE OLD MAGAZINES! HEY--LOOK AT THAT!


E CASE OF THE MISSING JUDGE
SOME JUDGE NAMED PORTER HAS DISAPPEARED--AND IT'S THE SAME JUDGE AS THE LADY HAD ON HER CHARM BRACELET!
YOW! BARRY--WELL, THE ACTOR--AND THAT FIGHTER--TH-THEY DISAPPEARED, TOO...


...ONLY I DIDN'T THINK OF THAT BEFORE! SHE COLLECTS CHARMS OF GUYS THAT VANISHED! WHAT KIND OF A CREEPY HOBBY IS THAT?
I'VE HAD IT WITH HER! SHE GIVES ME THE WILLIES! BESIDES--I DON'T NEED HER NO MORE!

...SO THAT'S WHY I ASKED FOR THIS MEETING, LADY! I WANT OUT! OF COURSE, I'LL DO THAT ONE JOB FOR YOU! BIG TONY IS A MAN OF HIS WORD!
THAT'S FINE, TONY! NOW, HERE IS THE JOB! ONE OF MY "BOYS"--LIKE YOU --NEEDS SOME HELP IN HIS PROFESSION!
HE'S A CITY LAWYER WHO--WITH ONE GREAT CONVICTION--COULD BECOME GOVERNOR OF THE STATE! IT'S SIMPSON! AND YOU'RE GOING TO LET HIM-- SEND YOU UP!
WHAT!
OH, I KNOW HOW YOU HATE HIM--HOW HE TRIED TO FRAME YOU! BUT JUST FORGET THAT! I'LL SEE THAT YOU'RE OUT IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS--AND A BIG MAN AGAIN!
NOT ON YOUR LIFE!
JAIL? THAT'S NOTHIN'! TWO YEARS I COULD DO STANDIN' ON ONE EAR! BUT MAKE THAT FINK GOVERNOR? THAT DIRTY RAT WHO HOUNDED ME DAY AND NIGHT? NO!
TURN MY WORST ENEMY INTO THE BIGGEST MAN AROUND--MAYBE EVEN PRESIDENT SOME DAY? NOT ON YOUR LIFE!
I'M GOIN' NOW--AND THIS IS A KNIFE, BABY! NOT A GUN--SO YOU CAN'T JAM IT!

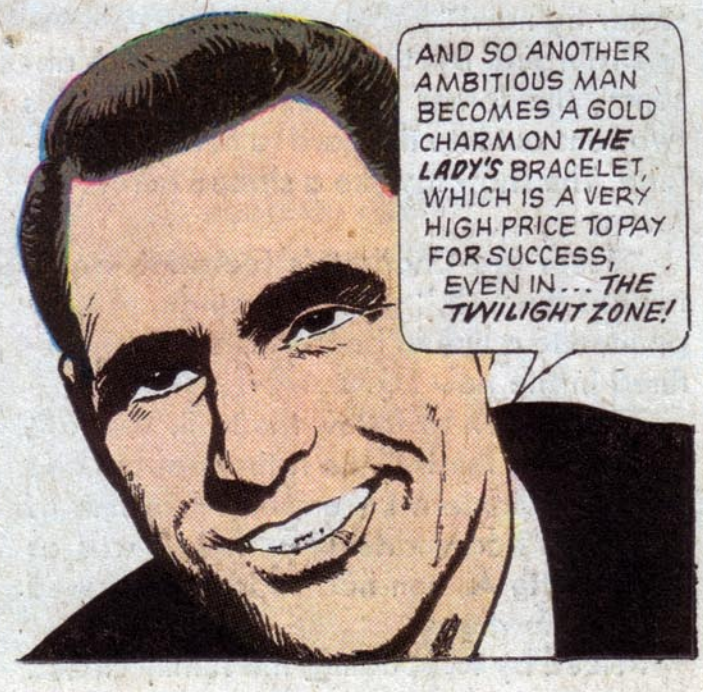

BUT AS TONY REACHES FOR THE DOOR HANDLE, AN EERIE SENSATION ENGULFS HIS BODY...
WHA--! I-I'M SHRINKING!... CAN'T REACH THE HANDLE!

GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE! SOMEBODY WILL KNOW SOME WAY TO GET RID OF THIS SHRINKING CURSE! BUT FIRST I GOTTA --
OH, NO! I'M TOO SMALL ALREADY!

STOP IT, LADY! YOU GOTTA STOP IT! I'LL DO ANYTHING FOR YOU! SIMPSON CAN BE PRESIDENT OR ANYTHING! I'LL SERVE TIME!... ONLY-- STOP!

THERE IS ONE, FINAL PIERCING SCREAM... THEN SILENCE! TONY IS NO LONGER HEARD-- AND HARDLY SEEN...

I'M SORRY--I JUST COULDN'T EVER TRUST YOU AGAIN! SO YOU'LL HAVE TO JOIN ALL THE OTHERS WHO TRIED TO BETRAY ME-- AMONG THE MISSING!
DRIVE ON, MORTON! A TALENTED YOUNG PAINTER LIVES JUST THREE BLOCKS AWAY... HE'D GIVE ANYTHING -- TO LEAD A CHARMED LIFE!


AND SO ANOTHER AMBITIOUS MAN BECOMES A GOLD CHARM ON THE LADY'S BRACELET, WHICH IS A VERY HIGH PRICE TO PAY FOR SUCCESS, EVEN IN... THE TWILIGHT ZONE!

Door to Oblivion

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For the Ashton family the horror began on a fall night in October, 1876. An early snow had fallen on their vegetable farm near London, England, but the Ashtons were spending the night comfortably popping corn at the fireplace in the living room.

The family had been eating the well-salted popcorn for some time when someone suggested that a drink of cold water from the well would be refreshing. It was then that Charlotte Ashton, the lovely 16-year-old daughter of the family, volunteered to go out into the farmyard and fetch a bucket of water. Bundling up in her heavy winter cloak, she left the house.

Time passed, but Charlotte did not return. The family was becoming impatient for the long-awaited drink. "What happened to Charlotte?" said her father Albert. "I could have brought five buckets of water by now!"

Disturbed by the girl's continued absence, the father lit a lantern and led his two sons out into the yard to hunt for Charlotte. The snow lay like a shroud across the farm.

"There are Charlotte's footprints going toward the well," said the younger son. He pointed to a line of boot-tracks sharply defined in the new snow.

They began to follow the trail. But halfway toward the well the father paused and raised his lantern uncertainly. The line of footprints had suddenly ended. It was as if Charlotte Ashton had suddenly stepped off into nowhere!

Seized by foreboding, the family circled the surrounding area, hoping to find more tracks. There were none. Fearfully, they hurried to the family well, only to find that it was covered with an undisturbed sheet of ice. Obviously Charlotte had never arrived there.

Neighbors and the police were quickly alerted. By dawn, thirty-five men were scouring the neighborhood of the farm, but they could find no clue to the fate of the pretty teen-ager.

"It's as if she stepped right out of this world," said one of the search party in a hushed voice.

Then about noon came an even more eerie event. Preparing lunch for the searchers, Mr. Ashton and a neighbor went to the well for water. It was then that they heard it—the voice of Charlotte Ashton, calling to them piteously!

"Father! I can see you! Can't you see me?" the voice wailed.

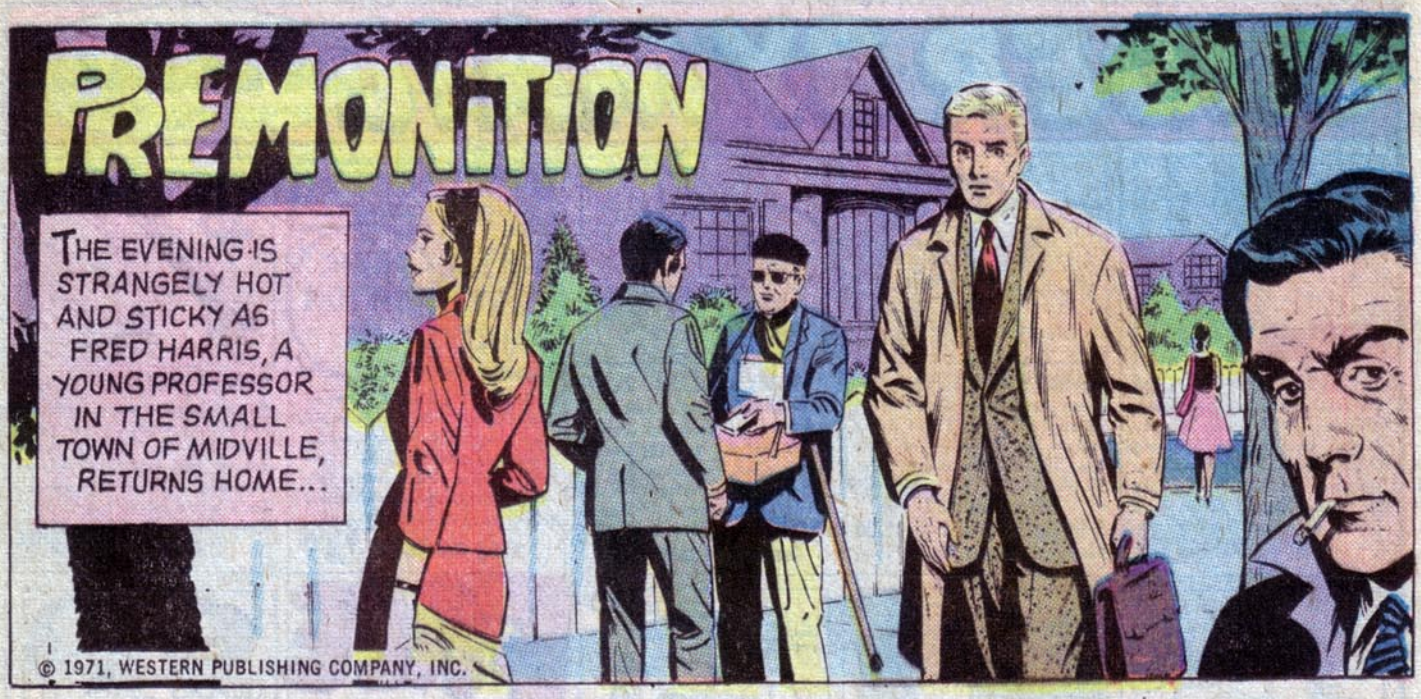
The voice seemed to echo from the interior of the well, but in the next moment it was coming from the branch of a nearby tree. Seconds later it was coming from a cracked boulder. "Please help me!" Charlotte begged. "I can't find my way back! The opening—it's disappeared!" The unseen girl broke into hysterical sobs

The search party hunted frantically. If they could hear Charlotte so loudly and distinctly, then she must be somewhere close by! And yet hours of searching were of no avail. Charlotte was nowhere to be found!

For the next four days the girl's voice moved about the farm, calling plaintively to the searchers. "In heaven's name, help me get out of here!" she cried again and yet again. But with each passing day her voice seemed to be getting weaker, more faint.

"It seems to be coming from a distance now," said a police official. And now there were growing intervals of silence between the cries for help. Eleven days after her disappearance the cries ceased forever.

Was Charlotte drawn into some warp of time and space? Did she step through some weird door into another dimension? The world may never know.


PREMONITION
THE EVENING IS STRANGELY HOT AND STICKY AS FRED HARRIS, A YOUNG PROFESSOR IN THE SMALL TOWN OF MIDVILLE, RETURNS HOME...
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NEAR THE GATE, HE SEES A SHADOWY FIGURE AT HIS DOOR...
HEY! WHO'S THAT?

AN OMINOUS FEELING MAKES HIM STOP AND WATCH...
HE... HE HAS A KEY!

HE LOOKS FAMILIAR... THE WAY HE WALKS ... HIS TOPCOAT...

AS LIGHT FROM INSIDE STRIKES THE STRANGER...
GOOD HEAVENS!

IT'S ME! I'M LOOKING AT MYSELF!

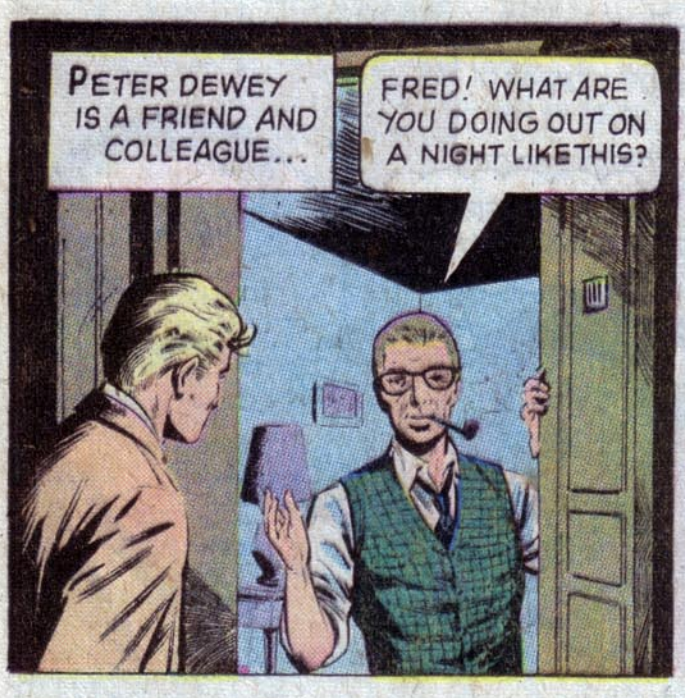
SUDDEN PANIC GRIPS FRED HARRIS...
IF HE'S ME... THEN WHO AM I?

RACING THROUGH EMPTY STREETS, FRED STOPS TO SPEAK WITH THE FIRST MAN HE SEES...

BUT TERROR CLOSES IN AS...
HE NEVER EVEN SAW ME!

NOBODY SEES ME!
WHY?...WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?

THE OPPRESSIVE HUMID AIR ERUPTS IN A SUMMER SHOWER...
I'VE GOT TO TALK TO SOMEONE I KNOW--NOW!


PETER DEWEY IS A FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE...
FRED! WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS?

PETE! YOU SEE ME! YOU KNOW ME! WHAT A RELIEF!
OF COURSE I KNOW YOU! WHAT IS GOING ON, FRED?

MINUTES LATER...
...AND BELIEVE ME, PETE, I SAW MYSELF! IT WAS ME!

SPEND THE NIGHT HERE...
WE'LL SEE THINGS MORE CLEARLY IN THE LIGHT OF DAY, FRED!

DURING THE NIGHT, A TREMENDOUS CRACK OF THUNDER AWAKENS FRED, TREMBLING AND BATHED IN SWEAT...
HOW FRESH THE AIR IS TODAY, PETE! DID YESTERDAY REALLY HAPPEN?
WE'LL SEE IF THERE'S ANOTHER YOU AT YOUR HOUSE!
WHEN MRS. O'BRIEN, THE CLEANING WOMAN, OPENS THE DOOR...
MR. HARRIS! THANK HEAVENS YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! I WAS AFRAID...
THE HOUSE WAS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING LAST NIGHT! YOUR BEDROOM--LOOK!
PETE, IF I'D SLEPT IN THAT BED LAST NIGHT--
SEEING YOURSELF ... NOT BEING SEEN ON THE STREET--IT MUST HAVE BEEN A WARNING, FRED, SOME KIND OF A MESSAGE TO KEEP YOU AWAY FROM HERE! YOU OWE YOUR LIFE TO THAT MYSTERIOUS PREMONITION!
THE END

THE TWILIGHT ZONE
The MISSING LINK
SOMETIMES YOU CAN RIDE A HOBBY-HORSE TOO FAR! PROFESSOR HARDING, THE RENOWNED ANTHROPOLOGIST, HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS FOR THE MISSING LINK--AND FOUND IT IN THE MOST STARTLING PLACE OF ALL!
YES, GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS, I CAN FINALLY ANNOUNCE I HAVE FOUND THE MISSING LINK BETWEEN APE--AND MAN!
YOU MEAN SOMETHING IN' THAT PILE OF BONES IS THE MISSING LINK?
THIS HAND BELONGED TO THE MISSING LINK, WHO LIVED SEVERAL MILLION YEARS AGO! THE FINGER TIPS WERE CHEWED OFF, PROBABLY BY A PREDATOR LIKE THE SABER-TOOTHED TIGER!
THE MAN WAS FOUR FEET TEN INCHES HIGH, WALKED WITH A STOOP, HAD AN APE-LIKE SNOUT, BUT A BRAIN CAPACITY TWELVE PER CENT HIGHER THAN ANY EXISTING APE, FED ON THE KILL OF OTHER ANIMALS--
YOU'RE PUTTING US ON!
YOU CAN'T TELL ALL THAT FROM A COUPLE OF HAND BONES!
IF YOU HAD SPENT YOUR LIFE STUDYING ANCIENT APE AND HUMAN SKELETONS AS I HAVE...
YOU'RE TOO MUCH, PROFESSOR!

GENTLEMEN, THE SKY LOOKS OMINOUS! I SUGGEST WE GET BACK TO OUR TRAILER CAMP BEFORE THE STORM HITS!
WE'VE BEEN HIT BY A STORM OF NONSENSE! HARDING TALKS AS IF HE LIVED A COUPLE OF MILLION YEARS AGO! HE'S OFF HIS ROCKER!
AN HOUR AFTER THE SKEPTICAL REPORTERS LEAVE, A STORM SWIRLS ACROSS THE AFRICAN VELDT...
FOOLS! I CAN TELL ALL ABOUT THE MISSING LINK FROM THIS HAND!
GOT TO KEEP LOW... CAN'T HOLD ANYTHING DOWN...WIND'S TOO STRONG...
NOT TILL MORNING DOES QUIET COME...
GONE... THE TENT, MY TOOLS, MY FOOD... EVEN THE MISSING LINK'S HAND... GONE!
HUNGER SENDS HARDING SEARCHING FOR FOOD IN THE NEARBY JUNGLE...
THE HYENA FOUND A CARCASS... IF I CAN SCARE IT OFF... I CAN EAT!

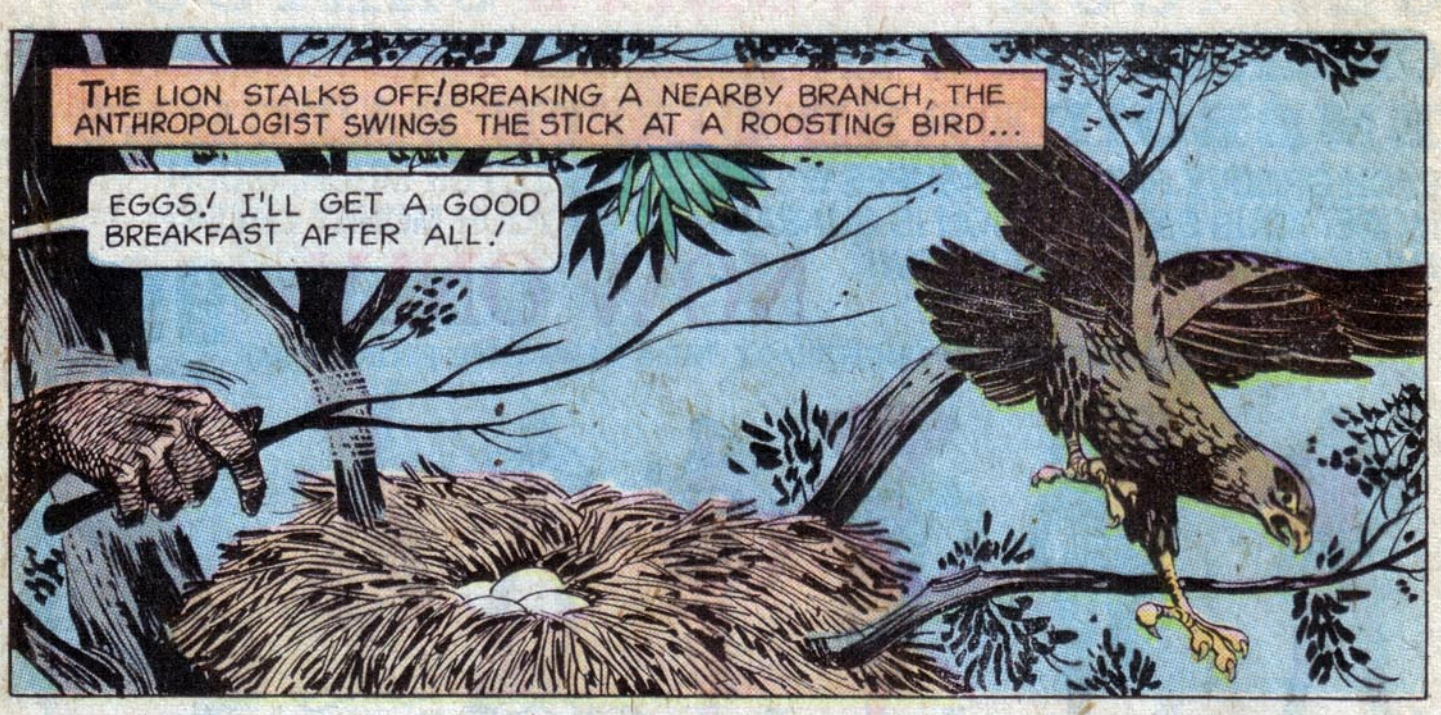
PICKING UP A ROCK, HARDING HURLS IT SAVAGELY...
THAT WILL GET RID OF THE HYENA AND LEAVE ITS KILL FOR ME!
AREENK!

GOOD! THERE'S ENOUGH FOR ME TO EAT!

TEARING AT THE RAW MEAT, HARDING GORGES ON THE FALLEN BEAST, BUT THEN SNIFFING THE AIR HE RISES QUICKLY...
LION... YES... I SMELL LION!

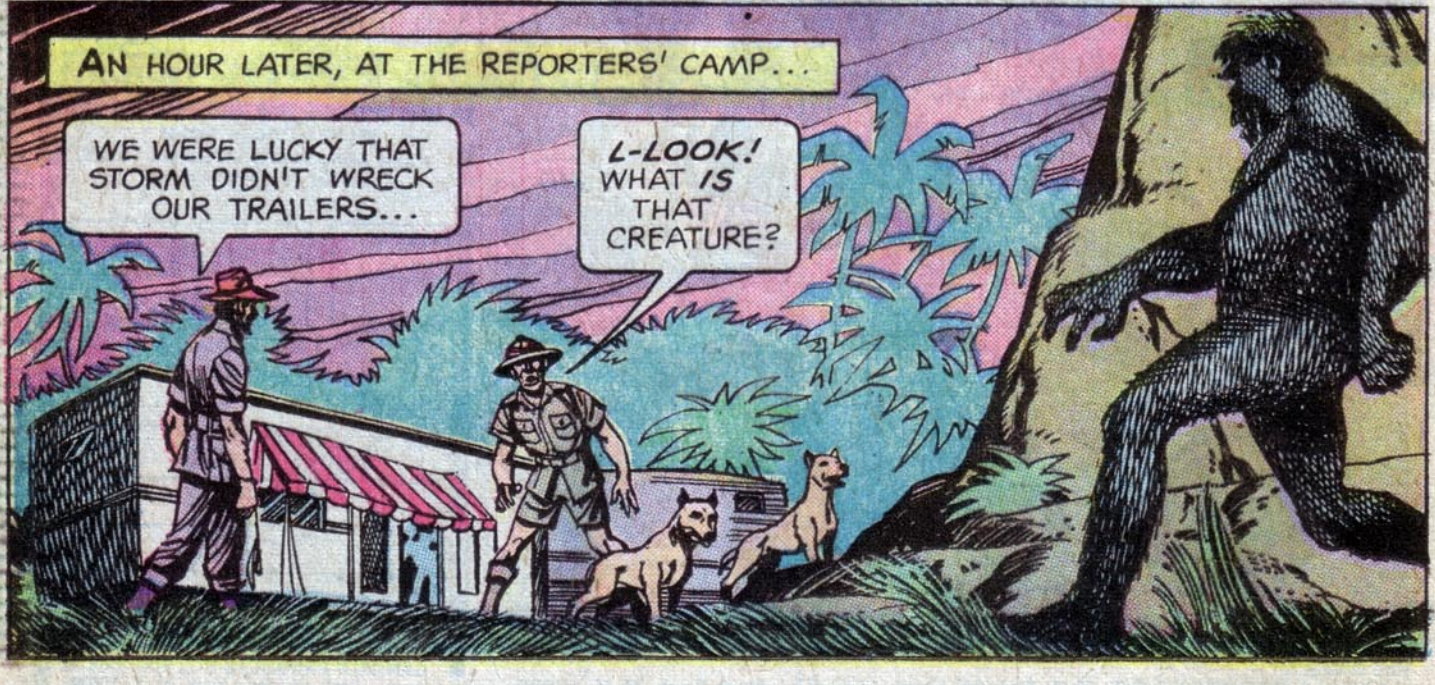
HAH! I WAS RIGHT! BUT THE LION DOESN'T SEE ME! IF HE WILL JUST KEEP WALKING ON...

MUST GET UP THE TREE... THE LION CAN'T FOLLOW ME...NOT UP HERE!


THE LION STALKS OFF! BREAKING A NEARBY BRANCH, THE ANTHROPOLOGIST SWINGS THE STICK AT A ROOSTING BIRD...
EGGS! I'LL GET A GOOD BREAKFAST AFTER ALL!

THEN, ONE AFTER ANOTHER, HE SEIZES THE EGGS, CRUSHES THE SHELLS OPEN AND FEASTS...

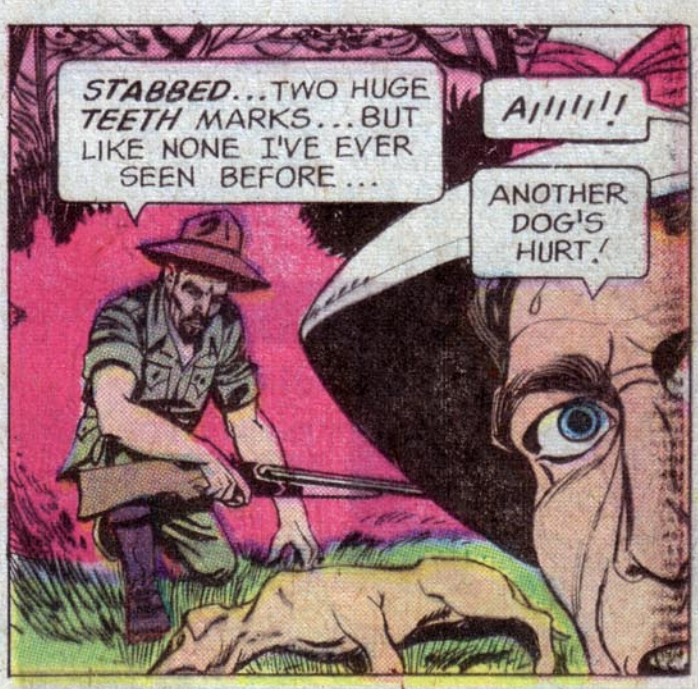
AS HARDING QUENCHES HIS THIRST AT A STREAM...
YES, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THE *MISSING LINK* MUST HAVE LOOKED LIKE! FUNNY, HOW MY MIND HAS SUDDENLY CREATED THE IMAGE I HAVE BEEN SEEKING!


AN HOUR LATER, AT THE REPORTERS' CAMP...
WE WERE LUCKY THAT STORM DIDN'T WRECK OUR TRAILERS...
L-LOOK! WHAT *IS* THAT CREATURE?

AWAARK-KLUGG!
I-IT TALKS! IT M-MUST BE HUMAN!
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE THE MISSING LINK HARDING DESCRIBED!
ARUFF!
WUFFF!

SUDDENLY, WITH SAVAGE HOWLS, THE HUNTING DOGS BOLT FORWARD FOR THE ALIEN BEING...
BACK! STOP! DON'T ATTACK!
TOO Llate!

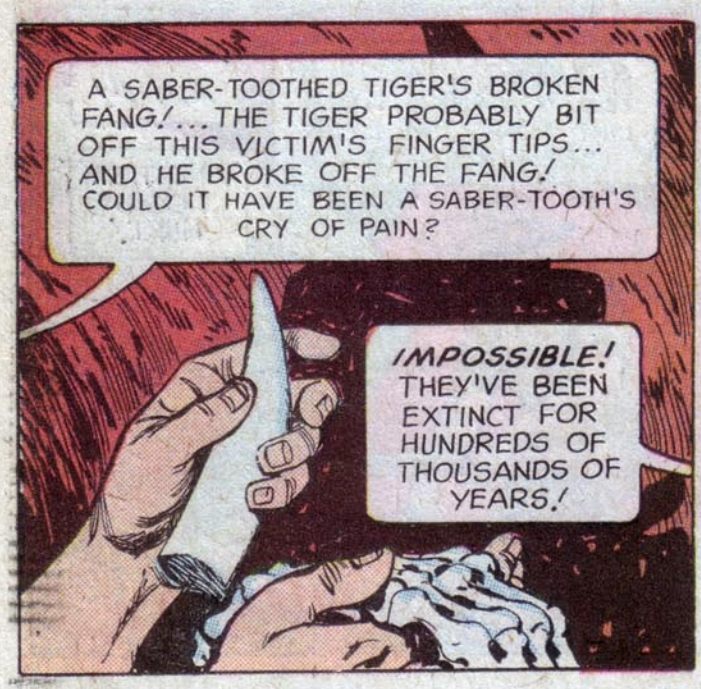
QUICKLY, THE GUIDE RACES AFTER HIS HUNTING DOGS...
AIEEEEE
A DOG'S HOWL... IT SOUNDED AS IF IT WERE IN PAIN!
THAT MISSING LINK CREATURE MUST HAVE TURNED ON ONE OF MY DOGS!

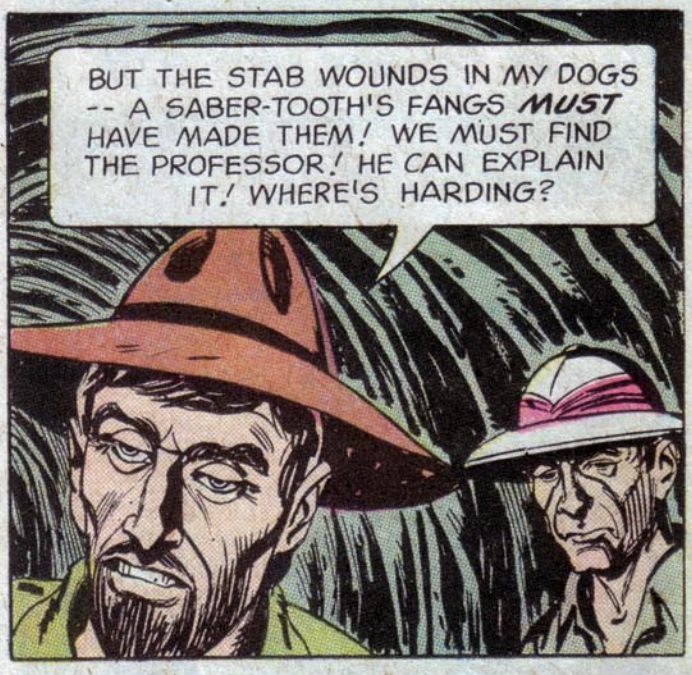

STABBED...TWO HUGE TEETH MARKS...BUT LIKE NONE I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE...
AIIIII!
ANOTHER DOG'S HURT!

FEARFULLY, THEY RUN TOWARD THE SICKENING SOUND...
DEAD... AND THE SAME TWO STRANGE STAB MARKS!
AIIIE!
ANOTHER DOG! W-WHAT IS KILLING THEM?

HURRYING AHEAD, A TERRIFYING ROAR STOPS THEM SHORT...
AROUGH
LION?
NOT LIKE ANY LION I EVER HEARD! KEEP BACK, WHILE I SCOUT THE CAVE!

CAUTIOUSLY, THE HUNTER ENTERS AND THEN BECKONS THE OTHERS...
A SKELETON...LOOKS HUMAN... AND WOW! THE TIPS OF ITS FINGERS ARE MISSING JUST LIKE IN THE SKELETON HAND HARDING SHOWED US!
LOOK WHAT'S IN ITS OTHER HAND!


A SABER-TOOTHED TIGER'S BROKEN FANG!...THE TIGER PROBABLY BIT OFF THIS VICTIM'S FINGER TIPS... AND HE BROKE OFF THE FANG! COULD IT HAVE BEEN A SABER-TOOTH'S CRY OF PAIN?
IMPOSSIBLE! THEY'VE BEEN EXTINCT FOR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS!

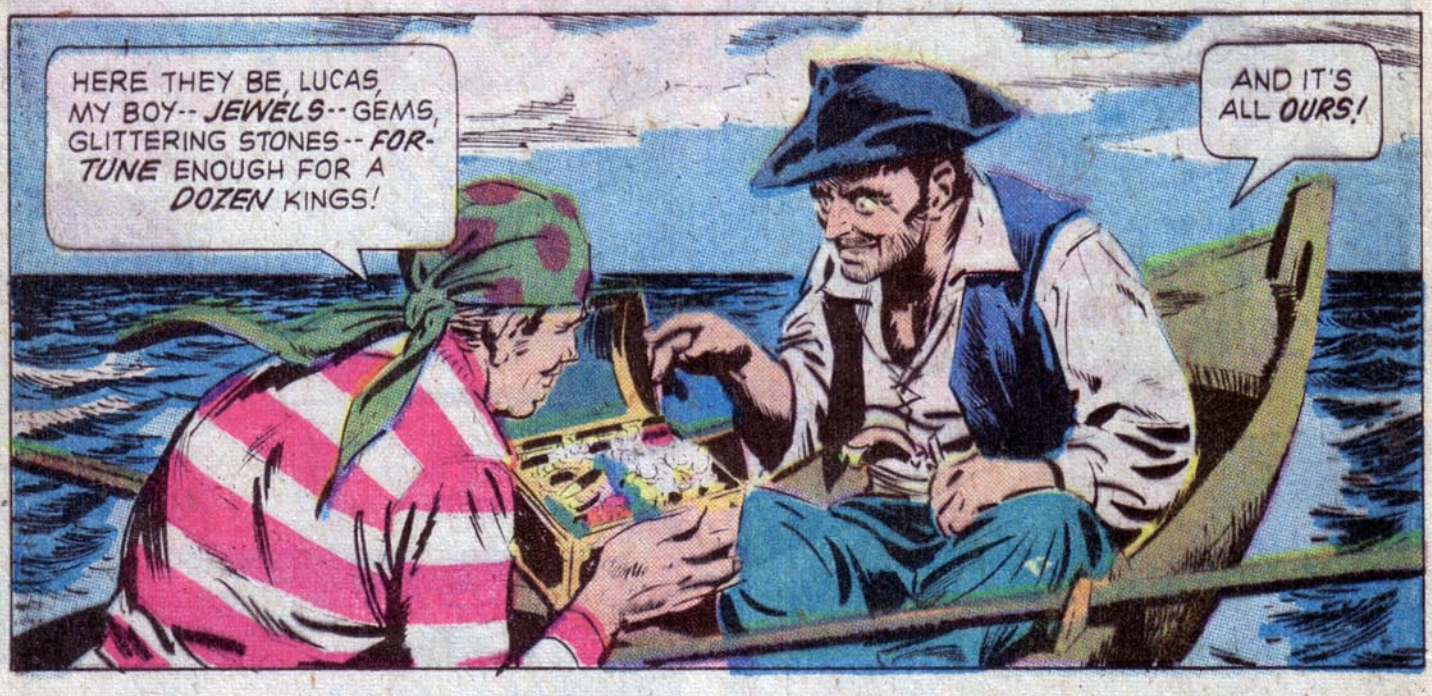

BUT THE STAB WOUNDS IN MY DOGS -- A SABER-TOOTH'S FANGS MUST HAVE MADE THEM! WE MUST FIND THE PROFESSOR! HE CAN EXPLAIN IT! WHERE'S HARDING?

THEY NEVER DID FIND PROFESSOR HARDING! HOW COULD THEY? HE HAD VANISHED TO MEET A FITTING END IN THE PREHISTORIC WORLD HE YEARNED FOR...IN THE TWILIGHT ZONE!

THE TWILIGHT ZONE
THE LAST VOYAGE
MEET ZACK BOSLEY AND LUCAS BRYNE, MEN WITHOUT CONSCIENCE -- TO WHOM MURDER IS AS NATURAL AN ACT AS BREATHING -- WANTON KILLERS WHO LEAVE THE PIECES OF THEIR PAST SMOULDERING ON THE WAVES AND STEER AN ACCIDENTAL COURSE STRAIGHT INTO THE HEART OF... THE TWILIGHT ZONE!
KAROOOM!
THERE SHE GOES, LUCAS -- HAVE YE EVER SEEN A PRETTIER SIGHT?
AYE, THE FUSE I SET TO THE GUNPOWDER IN THE HOLD GAVE US JUST ENOUGH TIME TO GET OVER TO THE SIDE AND CAST OFF BEFORE SHE BLEW!
I WARNED THE CAP'N NOT TO PUSH ME AROUND... TOLD HIM HE'D NEVER LIVE TO REGRET IT! HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME THEN -- MAYBE HE BELIEVES ME NOW ... WHEREVER HE IS! HA HA HA!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE QUEEN'S NAVY? THEY'LL DISCOVER WHAT WE'VE DONE -- AND THEY'LL HUNT US DOWN!
I THINK NOT! THEY'LL FIND JUST ONE LESS PIRATE VESSEL TO COPE WITH! THEY MIGHT EVEN THANK US!

WE HAVE THANKS ENOUGH RIGHT HERE IN THIS CHEST! I REMOVED IT FROM THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN JUST BEFORE WE JUMPED SHIP!
ENOUGH TALK! OPEN THE CHEST -- I WANT ANOTHER LOOK!


HERE THEY BE, LUCAS, MY BOY -- JEWELS -- GEMS, GLITTERING STONES -- FORTUNE ENOUGH FOR A DOZEN KINGS!
AND IT'S ALL OURS!

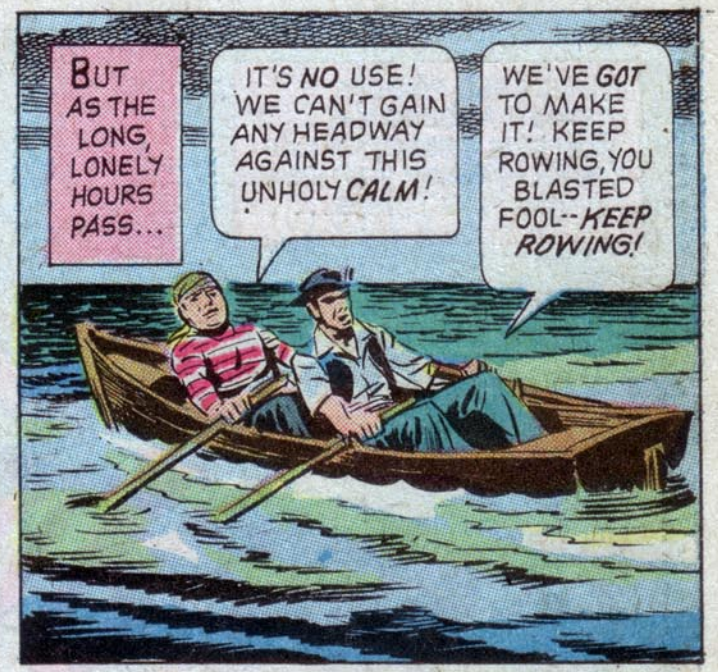
BUT IT'LL DO US LITTLE GOOD HERE -- ADRIFT ON THIS UNHOLY EXPANSE OF GREEN-FLECKED FOAM! THERE'S LAND ON THE HORIZON, ZACK -- SET OUR COURSE FOR THERE!

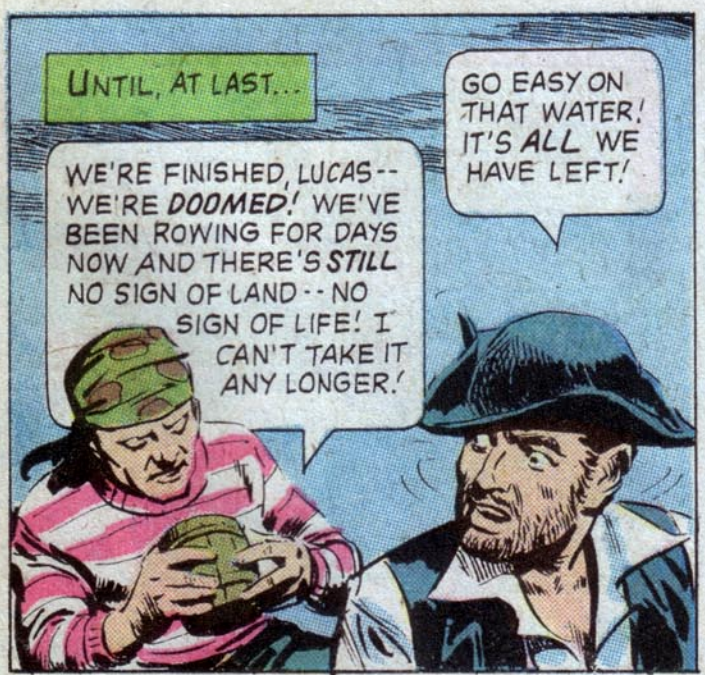
ONCE WE MAKE PORT, I NEVER WANT TO COME NEAR THE SEA AGAIN!

DARKNESS COMES WITH THE TIDE AND FOG SETTLES IN--AS THICK AS THE FEELING OF ANXIOUS EXPECTATION THAT FILLS THE MEN IN THE FLIMSY ROWBOAT...
IT CAN'T BE MUCH FURTHER NOW, ZACKO, ME BOY-- PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT! ROW!
ALL MY LIFE I'VE SAILED THE BRINY AND, LORD, HOW I'VE COME TO HATE IT! WHEN WE REACH PORT, I'M HIRING A CARRIAGE TO TAKE ME AS FAR AWAY FROM SALT AIR AND SEAWEED AS I CAN GET!
LISTEN TO IT, LUCAS... DO YE HEAR THE SHROUDING SILENCE AROUND US?... THERE SHOULD BE SOUNDS OF SHORE DRAWIN' NEAR AND YET... THERE IS NOTHING!
IT'S THE FOG, ZACKO... WHEN IT LIFTS I KNOW WE'LL BE SEEING THE SHORE... PATIENCE!
BUT WHEN THE PIERCING CRIMSON RAYS OF THE RISING SUN SPLIT OPEN THE NIGHT...
WHAT--? NO! IT CAN'T BE! IT JUST CAN'T BE!
DEAR HEAVEN, LUCAS-- WHAT'LL WE DO NOW?
THERE'S NO LAND IN SIGHT! WE'RE LOST... TERRIBLY, HOPELESSLY LOST... ADRIFT ON A SEA OF NOTHINGNESS!

THIS IS YOUR FAULT-- YOUR INCOMPETENCE! I COULD KILL YOU FOR THIS!
LUCAS, PLEASE, NO! IT WAS THE FOG-- THE FOG! SOMEHOW IT TURNED US IN THE WRONG DIRECTION! IF YOU KILL ME, YOU'LL BE ALL ALONE, LUCAS-- HOW WILL YOU SAVE YOURSELF THEN?

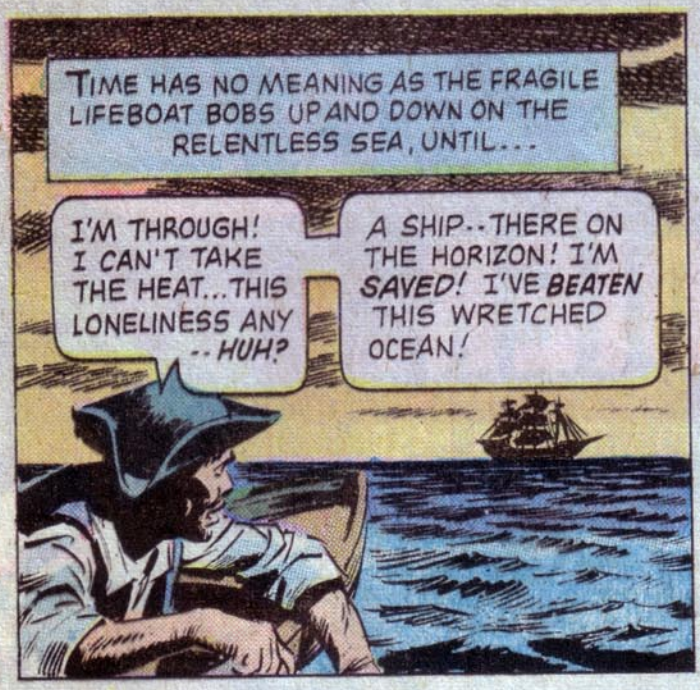
YOU'RE RIGHT, ZACK-- I'M SORRY! IT'S THIS CURSED SEA! I WANT TO BE RID OF IT SO BADLY, I CAN TASTE IT!
YOU WILL BE, LUCAS! WE'VE ENOUGH FOOD AND WATER TO LAST SEVERAL DAYS! WE'LL FIND LAND!

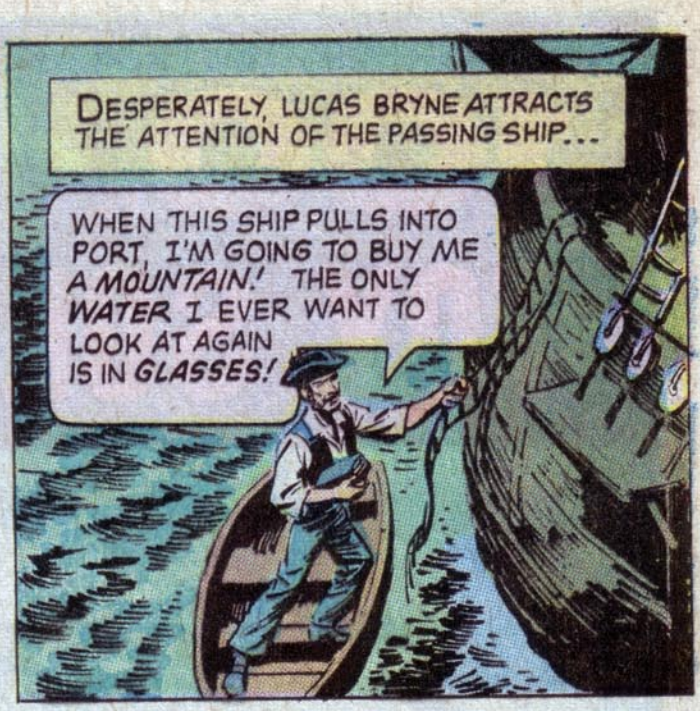

BUT AS THE LONG, LONELY HOURS PASS...
IT'S NO USE! WE CAN'T GAIN ANY HEADWAY AGAINST THIS UNHOLY CALM!
WE'VE GOT TO MAKE IT! KEEP ROWING, YOU BLASTED FOOL-- KEEP ROWING!


UNTIL, AT LAST...
WE'RE FINISHED, LUCAS-- WE'RE DOOMED! WE'VE BEEN ROWING FOR DAYS NOW AND THERE'S STILL NO SIGN OF LAND -- NO SIGN OF LIFE! I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY LONGER!
GO EASY ON THAT WATER! IT'S ALL WE HAVE LEFT!

MY THROAT... SO PARCHED... SO DRY! I...
YOU CURSED GLUTTON-- I TOLD YOU TO TAKE CARE! LEAVE SOME OF THAT FOR ME!

GONE--ALL OF IT--GONE! I WARNED YOU--I GAVE YOU A CHANCE...
LUCAS! NO...I'M SORRY, LUCAS...I WAS THIRSTY--SO THIRSTY! PLEASE ...PLEASE!
MY WATER...MY ONLY HOPE FOR SURVIVAL! YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE!
NOOOOo...
MADDENED FINGERS TIGHTEN AROUND ZACK BOSLEY'S THROAT, FORCING AN ILL-SPENT LIFE FROM GASPING LUNGS...
ZACK? ZACK! I'VE KILLED HIM! HE'S DEAD!
GOODBYE, ZACK--THE TREASURE'S ALL MINE NOW! NOT THAT I'LL EVER LIVE TO SPEND IT! HA HA HA HA!
MAYBE YOU WERE THE LUCKY ONE, ZACKO--YOU DIED QUICKLY!
ALL MY LIFE, RIDING THESE HEARTLESS WAVES! ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS GET AWAY FROM THEM! BUT NOW IT SEEMS I'LL DIE HERE--AND THERE WON'T EVEN BE A MARKER TO SHOW THE PLACE!


TIME HAS NO MEANING AS THE FRAGILE LIFEBOAT BOBS UP AND DOWN ON THE RELENTLESS SEA, UNTIL...
I'M THROUGH! I CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT...THIS LONELINESS ANY -- HUH?
A SHIP--THERE ON THE HORIZON! I'M SAVED! I'VE BEATEN THIS WRETCHED OCEAN!


DESPERATELY, LUCAS BRYNE ATTRACTS THE ATTENTION OF THE PASSING SHIP...
WHEN THIS SHIP PULLS INTO PORT, I'M GOING TO BUY ME A MOUNTAIN! THE ONLY WATER I EVER WANT TO LOOK AT AGAIN IS IN GLASSES!

MOMENTS LATER...
CAPTAIN, I OWE YOU MY LIFE! HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU?
I'D SAVE MY THANKS IF I WERE YOU! WE HAVE DONE YOU NO FAVOR, FRIEND!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHERE IS THIS SHIP BOUND? WHEN DO WE REACH PORT?
PORT? THIS SHIP HASN'T TOUCHED PORT SINCE BEFORE YOUR FATHER'S FATHER WAS EVEN A DREAM! TAKE A LOOK AT WHERE YOU ARE!

WELCOME ABOARD THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!
THE FLYING DUTCHMAN
FADE-OUT ON THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, A PHANTOM SHIP DOOMED TO ROAM THE SWIRLING SEAS FOREVER--THAT NOW CARRIES A HEART-SICK, SCREAMING PASSENGER BACK WITH IT INTO THE MISTS--BACK INTO THAT FOG-SHROUDED SHADOWLAND CALLED... THE TWILIGHT ZONE!